

## PLANTERS LIBERAL TO JAPANESE, SAYS LABOR BUREAU HEAD

Presenting in a compact and authoritative manner the case of the sugar planters on the wage question, Royal D. Mead, director of the laborers' association, has addressed the Japanese community through an open letter to the Japanese press. The communication follows the organization of the leading Japanese business and professional men Monday night into an association to secure an increase in agricultural laborers' wages.

The planters' statement is replete with facts, and sets forth without heat, a plain appeal to the good sense of the Japanese.

For some time past, writes Mr. Mead, you have been conducting an agitation for an increase of the wages of Japanese laborers on the plantations, claiming that the sugar companies are making large profits, that the cost of living has increased materially and that the wages of Japanese have not been advanced.

Usually there are two sides to any question. The plantations have no spokesman among the Japanese press and I therefore take this means of presenting something on the planters' side of the question.

Japanese laborers are now receiving far more compensations than ever before. The bonus system was adopted for the very purpose of giving laborers a share of the profits of the plantations when the price of sugar is high. It accomplishes a more substantial increase in the compensation of laborers than would be realized from a straight increase of thirty per cent in wages which you are advocating.

### MILLIONS PAID IN BONUSES

In April, 1916 the bonus rate was increased fifty per cent and the bonus was extended to contractors, who had not theretofore participated. The bonus percentage for the year ending October 31, 1916 was on the average 52.95 per cent and a total of \$4,663,684.99 was paid by the plantations in the way of bonus to laborers. Of this amount Japanese laborers were paid \$2,239,965.62.

The rate of bonus up to July 31 of the present bonus year is sixty-six per cent; if the present price of sugar continues for the remainder of the present bonus year, which will end October 31, the bonus rate will be not less than seventy-nine, in which event I believe that the total expenditure on account of the bonus will exceed seven millions of dollars.

It should be borne in mind that the present very high price of sugar operates to substantially increase the bonus percentage only a very small proportion of the total sugar crop will obtain this high price. About twenty-five per cent of this year's crop remains to be sold and many of the plantations have already marketed all or almost all of their sugar. For a number of months in the early part of this year and at a time when most of the sugar was being marketed, the average price ranged about five and one-half cents per pound or two cents per pound less than the present New York average price. Notwithstanding this, the bonus to laborers will be calculated on the average price of sugar for the year, which price, as above stated, will be considerably higher than the price which the planters will receive.

### MISLEADING STATEMENTS

You have repeatedly stated in your columns that the wage of Japanese laborers is \$20 per month. Such statements are very misleading. Everyone who has knowledge of plantation conditions knows that there are very few Japanese working at that rate. We have statements from a few plantations, showing the average number of days worked by Japanese, the average wages of the day men, the average earnings of the contractors and the bonuses paid for the year ending October 31, 1916. Statements of some of the plantations are as follows:

	Av. Days Worked per month	Av. Wages per month	Av. Bonus per month	Total Av. Earnings per month	Total Av. Earnings per day
<b>Ewa Plantation</b>					
Day laborers	24.17	\$24.84	\$12.76	\$37.60	\$1.55
Short Term Contractors (men and women)	20	25.06	15.88	40.94	2.00
Cultivation Contractors (men and women)	25.16	36.76	16.23	52.99	2.10
<b>Pioneer Mill</b>					
Day laborers	21.90	13.22	35.12	1.53	
Short Term Contractors	23	(monthly average not given)		2.00	
Cultivation Contractors				1.63	
<b>Hawaiian Agricultural Company</b>					
Day laborers	21.57	25.00	11.32	36.32	1.68
All Contractors	20.04	26.52	11.71	38.23	1.90
<b>Hutchinson Sugar Plantation</b>					
Day laborers	25.77	25.83	13.68	39.51	1.53
Contractors	23.5	29.90	9.16	39.06	1.66
<b>Hilo Sugar Company</b>					
Day laborers	21.38	24.29	12.86	37.15	1.73
Contractors	20.8	29.51	10.58	40.09	1.92
<b>Wakala Mill Company</b>					
Day laborers	22.6	24.72	11.48	36.20	1.60
Contractors	14.8	17.74	5.95	23.69	1.60
<b>Hawi Mill</b>					
Day laborers	23.25	28.40	7.95	38.35	1.65

The bonus was paid to contractors for only seven months of the year. In addition to the bonus, laborers will also bear in mind that all laborers are supplied with free quarters, fuel, water, medical and hospital attendance, the cost of which to a plantation per laborer is very conservative, figured at twenty-five cents per day.

We are also informed by the plantations above mentioned that the charges made by the boarding houses for boarding single men range from \$8 to \$10 per month. Up to three months ago the rate was from \$6.50 to \$8 per month.

### LABORER HAS SURPLUS

There must therefore be a very considerable surplus left over from a laborer's monthly earnings.

You have stated a number of times if a laborer is forced to lay off of illness or for other unavoidable reasons is unable to work twenty days in a month, no bonus will be paid him. In this you are wrong. The bonus system carries with it the following provision: "If the laborer shall have been excused from work by the manager because of physical disability, or other good reason, the loss of time caused thereby shall not be construed to deprive him of the entire amount of the bonus, but he shall be entitled to a proportion of the same for the number of days worked."

The average number of days worked per month by the laborers upon the plantations above does not seem to indicate that they have suffered any great hardship from over work. Any laborer who can lay off six days per month not including Sundays or seventy-two days per year, which he can do and still be entitled to a bonus, does not require to have any sympathy wasted upon him because of being over-worked. Even when a man works only twenty-three days out of twenty-five working days per month he is taking seven holidays per month including Sundays; eighty-four holidays per year, or in other words, he is idle for over twenty-three per cent of the three hundred and sixty-five days in a year. I do not think that many employers in Honolulu would keep a man in a permanent position, whether he be laborer or clerk, if he worked only twenty-three days of each month.

### BETTER OFF THAN IN CITY

The above figures of wages and earnings of plantation laborers will compare very favorably with the wages paid Japanese day laborers in and around Honolulu. Japanese laborers in Honolulu on ordinary day work receive \$1.75 per day. This rate was recently advanced from \$1.50 per day. Out of this they pay their car fare to and from work. The boarding houses charge single men \$12 per month for board alone and the rent of even a very small room is now \$5 per month. If a laborer lives permanently at a Japanese hotel he is charged at the rate of seventy-five cents per day on a monthly basis. Such a laborer receives no perquisites of any kind such as are provided by the plantations. He is therefore not as well off as the plantation man.

The advance in wages of Japanese laborers has been very substantial. Let us suppose for illustration that the day laborers at Ewa Plantation earned as much in wages before the war (1913) as during 1916, or, as above shown, \$24.84 per month. The bonus for the year ending October 31, 1913 was one per cent. Add one per cent to the wages and the laborer's total monthly earnings would have been \$25.09. The Ewa Plantation Company states that the average monthly wages of Japanese day laborers for eight months to June 29, 1917 have been \$24.05. It is conservatively estimated that the average bonus per month will total \$19.11; thus making the laborer's earnings for the year at the rate of \$43.16 per month. This is an increase over 1913 of \$18.07 or seventy per cent.

I doubt if any other employers in the Territory or out of it for that matter, can show a like increase.

No one will deny that the sugar planters of Hawaii have enjoyed prosperous times since the war began and I think it must be conceded that they have been liberal in the treatment of their laborers. The future, however, is surrounded with many uncertainties. We know that the cost of producing sugar have increased very much indeed and that legislation passed or under consideration by congress will take a substantial percentage of this year's profits. The financial requirements of the government to conduct the war and assist our allies will be very large and it is to be expected that the future taxation of profits will be greater than at present. I believe that no one realizes what will have to be contributed to the nation's needs by those who are engaged in profitable enterprises.

ROYAL D. MEAD,

Director Labor Bureau, Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association.

## DOCTORS TELL AT INQUEST OF DEATH OF FLORENCE BERG

Long Delayed Probe of Tragic End of Nurse Is Finally Begun But Is Continued

LUDY WILL TESTIFY AT COMING SESSION

Name of Army Man Is Brought Into Proceedings and His Testimony Is Eagerly Awaited

The inquest on the body of Miss Florence Berg, formerly operating nurse at Queen's Hospital, and who died in the Beretania Sanitarium at the end of last month from the effects of a criminal operation, was begun yesterday.

Evidence adduced was of a medical nature and at half-past four o'clock an adjournment was taken until next Monday afternoon at two o'clock.

It is understood that there are a number of important witnesses to be called, including Dr. J. M. Ludy, of the medical reserve corps, whose name has been closely connected with the case, and that evidence of a sensational character will be forthcoming.

Deputy City Attorney A. M. Cristy watched the case on behalf of the government. The proceedings were conducted by Coroner Julius W. Asch.

Dr. C. B. Cooper testified that he had been called into the case at the instance of Doctor Ludy. Miss Berg told him that she was suffering from ptomaine poisoning, the result of eating pickles and ice cream. He suggested that she go to the Queen's Hospital but this she positively refused to do. She was then in a state of collapse. Witnesses accused her of having had a miscarriage and she indignantly denied that she had ever been pregnant.

Witness spoke of the finding of a five or six-month fetus in a closet of the room occupied by Miss Berg at the Engle-side rooming house, and stated that it had been reported to him that some surgical instruments had been found in the closet.

Dr. A. F. Jackson, who stated, when stepped into the case and done his duty until his unhappy termination.

Life Could Have Been Saved. Witness expressed his opinion that Miss Berg came to her death from loss of blood consequent on a criminal operation and stated that had she gone to the hospital her life could probably have been saved.

"She bluffed it out and lied to us and fooled us," exclaimed Doctor Cooper.

Blood-stained surgical instruments found in the closet were offered in evidence and witness stated that it was absolutely impossible for deceased to have performed the operation herself; this with particular reference to the use of a tenaculum.

Dr. Robert G. Ayer testified to having made a post-mortem examination of the body and that the cause of death was septicemia. He spoke of an infection and stated that had hemorrhage not taken place, deceased would in all probability have been able to resist the infection.

Dr. A. K. Haseguchi, who assisted in the conduct of the post-mortem, gave evidence along the lines of that supplied by Doctor Ayer.

Dr. L. L. Patterson, board of health physician, testified that he knew Miss Berg very well and that about a year ago she had occupied a cottage of his at Royal Grove for a period of about two months.

Was a Good Girl. "Nothing was ever said against the girl's morals," stated the witness, "and every indication pointed to the conclusion that she was a very moral girl."

Dr. R. W. Benz stated that he was connected with the case in conjunction with Doctor Cooper and his testimony was in consonance with that of other physicians. He testified that Superintendent Roehl of Queen's Hospital had told him that he was willing to do everything in his power to aid the suffering woman.

Dr. A. F. Jackson testified that he was well acquainted with Miss Berg and that he heard of nothing wrong about her until about July 23, when Miss Kemp, head nurse at the Palama Settlement, told him that Miss Berg had been discharged from Queen's Hospital on account of being five or six months pregnant. Witness stated that common rumor had it that Doctor Ludy was the cause of her condition.

Witness said that Ludy was a good friend of his and that she was being circulated. He told Miss Kemp to get in touch with Miss Berg and be a friend to her in her need in every possible way.

Doctor Jackson testified that on the morning of July 28 he was at the police station and that the ambulance returned from the Engle-side with the report that Miss Berg refused to be moved to the Beretania Sanitarium until four o'clock that afternoon, and that she had to see a lieutenant first.

Enters Doctor Ludy. Witness then phoned to Ludy and the latter asked him what he could do for him. Doctor Jackson in return asked what he could do for Ludy, and that he wanted to see witness and asked him not to believe what he might have heard about his connection with the condition of Miss Berg.

At half past twelve o'clock witness met Ludy at his room in the Royal Hawaiian Hotel by appointment.

"Ludy then told me," stated witness, "that he was very fond of Miss Berg and that he had been going with her for several months in an open and above-board manner. He said that he had known that she was pregnant, even though another man was responsible, and would have married her to save her honor. Ludy told me that he had kept company with her in an honest manner and that another man had enjoyed intimate relations with her."

Witness testified that he told Ludy that Miss Berg had said that she was to meet an army man before four o'clock and that the doctor had told him that he would go to the Engle-side that afternoon, but not alone.

At half past three o'clock that afternoon witness again talked to Ludy and offered to accompany him to the place where Miss Berg was.

"I told Ludy," stated witness, "that I would see Doctor Cooper and tell him that I was going to visit Miss Berg in a friendly way and not with any idea of mixing up in the case. I did so, and Doctor Cooper asked me to identify myself with the case."

Witness stated that he and Ludy then visited Miss Berg and found her in a very weak condition and semi-delirious. The girl consented to go to the Beretania Sanitarium provided Ludy would accompany her, at seven o'clock. She was removed to the sanitarium without trouble.

Girl Cried for Ludy. Dr. Jackson stated that at the sanitarium Miss Berg cried out continually for Ludy, and that he came to see her once or twice. He said that he rather regretted Ludy from going in to see the girl as he didn't see what good could come of it.

Witness stated that several hours before her death Miss Berg was wildly delirious and again called for Ludy. He showed him and later on he came to the sanitarium and saw the girl, who exclaimed that she was glad to see him. She said that she didn't know but what something had happened in the nature of a conspiracy to keep him from coming to her. Ludy with Doctor Jackson and Keane, helped to put Miss Berg in a comfortable position.

Witness stated that following this an examination was made of Miss Berg during which she went into convulsions and passed away.

The previous day a transfusion of blood had been made from a willing party. Several doctors submitted to the test to ascertain if their blood was suitable, including Doctor Ludy, whose blood was found to be most suitable of all. Witness said that Doctor Ludy was willing to allow the use of his blood for transfusing purposes should the test sample be found to come up to requirements.

Doctor Jackson stated that he was of the opinion that it was quite possible for a woman of Miss Berg's medical knowledge to have performed the operation himself. He said that during her service at the Queen's Hospital she had seen several hundreds of operations performed with a tenaculum.

Witness testified that he saw Ludy following the death of the girl and that he had told him that he heard that a number of nurses were getting up a fund to defray the expenses of a thorough investigation of the circumstances surrounding the death of Miss Berg. Ludy replied that most of the nurses had deserted Miss Berg when they heard of her condition, and that he was of the opinion that if they regarded her good name very highly they should keep quiet and have as little to say about the unfortunate affair as possible.

Further testimony of witness was to the effect that he had heard that Captain Eccles, a few days previous to leaving on the transport which departed on July 31, had told a person that he had heard that Ludy had performed a criminal operation on a hospital nurse. Witness went to Miss Berg and asked if there was any truth in the rumor and was told emphatically "not."

Witness stated that he had tried to keep an open mind in the matter and when asked by Cristy if he had stated that he was aware of a growing opinion on his part that Ludy was the responsible for Miss Berg's death, replied that he might have said something of the kind.

Doctor Jackson said that Ludy had mentioned to him that Miss Berg had been going around with two other men, and said that one of them named by Ludy was Mr. Flavin, a postoffice employee, who left Honolulu several months ago. Ludy also mentioned that he had heard that Ludy had performed a criminal operation on a hospital nurse. Roehl of the Queen's Hospital had been spoken of as possibly being responsible for Miss Berg's condition.

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